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## ASTORIAN PUBLISHING COMPANY.

### THE OREGONIAN'S SIDE WON.

The decisive defeat of the Simon faction of the republican party in the Multnomah county primaries was a decided victory for the Oregonian, which would likewise have won a decided victory had the Mitchell faction been defeated. The logic of a situation of this sort ought to be just as clear as mud to anyone who ever was committed to the insane asylum for the benefit of his mental condition.

The two factions have been at it for a long time. In a strongly republican county they have waged war against each other to the mutual detriment of each wing of the party, and occasionally, as a result of their fight, the democratic sprinters have passed the two struggling elements on the political race track. Two years ago the Simonites lost by a few hundred votes, while this year they have gone down to crushing defeat. The Simon faction was most indiscreet in promulgating its issues, one of which was the election of an Astoria man to the United States senate. It would seem the voters of the county have vigorously repudiated the former senator, whose showing was a miserable one, even with the assistance of his democratic friends.

The unique feature of the situation is the Oregonian's attitude. Every one knows Mr. Scott feels aggrieved because of his failure to land himself in the United States senate, where he might hobnob with his friend Senator Hoar and the other senators whom his paper has so long vilified. Mr. Scott did not get the plum, which went to an Astoria man—a rank outsider who had committed the capital offense of taking up his residence in Astoria. The editor told friends he hoped the Mitchell faction would win but we have an idea he had his fingers crossed when he made the statement. However, he saw the hand writing on the wall, and the Oregonian merely sold its columns at \$100 each and permitted each side to present its claims. Editorially it said nothing. Pending the count of the ballots, how could it know which side it was on? To have previously committed itself would have been to disregard all the ethics of diplomacy.

Surely the defeat of the Simon faction was a great and lasting victory for the Oregonian.

### IDEAL FUEL OF THE UNITED STATES.

Had Zoroaster pondered the problems of existence on the northwest flank of the Appalachian mountains instead of along the shores of the Caspian sea, he would probably not have lacked the inspiration which gave to his philosophy a symbol of the eternal, for the everlasting fires of the Parsees might be more than duplicated by the springs of natural gas in the United States. Indeed, there is no country in the world which can compare with ours in its production of this perfect fuel. The combined production of all other countries is not over 1 1/2 per cent of the quantity produced in the United States, which had in 1902 a value of \$30,867,668. A large portion of even the small outside production comes indeed from our neighbor, Canada.

Mr. F. H. Oliphant's report on the production of natural gas in 1902, which the United States geological survey has just published as an extract from its annual volume of mineral resources, is full of interesting details about the history, output, value, and uses of this most satisfactory combustible.

The records of early investigators and missionaries show that natural gas has been known to exist in natural springs in western New York, western Pennsylvania, central West Virginia, northeastern Kentucky and southeastern Ohio for at least 250 years. In 1775 General Washington visited a burning natural gas spring on the northeast bank of the Great Kanawha river in West Virginia, a few miles east of the present city of Charleston. He was so impressed by the phenomenon that he preempted an acre of land surrounding the spring and declared it to be public forever.

The earliest economic use of natural gas in this country was probably made in lighting the village of Fredonia, Chautauqua county, N. Y., in 1821. The

existence and utilization and use of this gas at Fredonia became widely known, both in this country and abroad, and excited the liveliest interest among scientific men. So little suspected, however, was the presence of the enormous volume of gas since developed that, when it was further explored, it was pronounced "unparalleled on the face of the globe," and Humboldt is quoted as declaring it the eighth wonder of the world.

Its introduction into commercial use was slow, but after its value was fully demonstrated there was a rush of capital, and a large amount of money was invested in gas territory, gas wells, and pipe lines. Then followed a period of reckless consumption and appalling waste. Many of the original fields were rapidly depleted of their high pressure. Not until it was fully realized that a large portion of the natural supply had been consumed and dissipated by the extravagant methods in use were improved means adopted for holding back the gas in the original rock reservoirs. This was done by shutting off the wells, by cutting off all flow off standpipes and escapes, by improving the joints of the pipe lines, and by the more economical consumption of the gas.

This economy came rather late, but enough of the original supply remains, stored principally in the deep and prolific sands of northern and southwestern Pennsylvania and western West Virginia, to furnish this ideal household fuel for many years to come. What may be done by deeper drilling and improved methods to prolong its use indefinitely is yet unknown.

### AMERICA THE SECOND NAVAL POWER.

The report of the house naval committee accompanying the navy appropriation bill embodies certain facts that ought to be reassuring to those who fear that we are being left behind in the race for supremacy on the sea. An inspection of the comparative tables of American and foreign construction shows, among other things:

That when the ships now building are finished we shall be the third naval power in the world in paper tonnage and the second in real fighting strength.

That we are building as much as France and Russia, now the second and third naval powers, put together.

That we are building almost as much as Great Britain, and more than Germany, Russia and Japan combined.

That of first-class battleships, the chief strength of a navy, we are building a greater tonnage than any other power, not excepting England, and more than France and Germany combined.

That of armored cruisers, the remaining element of the battle line, we are building a greater tonnage than any power except England, and more than all other powers combined aside from England and France.

That our ships now under construction will more than double the strength of our navy, and when they are finished the navy will be more than three times as large and five times as strong as it was at the outbreak of the Spanish war.

That our new program of construction provided in the pending naval appropriation bill is four times as great in tonnage of fighting ships as that of France the only country that still stands between us and second place in the list of naval powers.

If the Monroe doctrine depends upon the strength of the American navy, as some of its guardians say it does, it appears to be a reasonably protected infant.

The accident at the residence of Police Commissioner Cook which resulted in the death of the servant, Miss Willen, was indeed a lamentable affair, which no one so sincerely regrets as the members of the family. That the shooting was purely accidental is evident from the manly statement of the little fellow whose blunder cost the life of the maid. In the case of an older person, a confession similar to that of Mr. Cook's son would be equivalent to a plea of "guilty" to criminal carelessness. The child lacks the discretion of an adult, but his good breeding comes to the surface when he truthfully throws the whole of the blame upon himself. The accident merely demonstrates that boys and guns should be as widely separated as possible, and should serve as a warning to those fond parents who provide their children with fire arms as a means of amusement. Mr. Cook committed himself to no such folly, and can in no way be held responsible for the death of the maid.

The question whether coal is or is not rightly to be considered contraband of war may be more permanently settled by the war in the far east than has ever been agreed upon before.

While at Portland for repairs, the bar dredge Chinook might find it expedient to dredge a hole in the Multnomah political situation.

St. Patrick may have chased all the snakes out of Ireland, but he didn't chase all the Irish out of snakeland.

The Simon faction lost by a nose.

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LEAVE	PORTLAND	ARRIVE
8:00 a.m.	Portland Union Depot	11:10 a.m.
7:00 p.m.	Portland Union Depot	9:40 p.m.

LEAVE	ASTORIA	ARRIVE
7:45 a.m.	For Portland and Way Points	11:30 a.m.
6:10 p.m.	Way Points	10:30 p.m.

LEAVE	SEASIDE DIVISION	ARRIVE
8:15 a.m.	Astoria for Warrenton, Flavel, Stevens, Hammond and Seaside	7:40 a.m.
11:35 a.m.	ton, Flavel, Stevens, Hammond and Seaside	4:00 p.m.
5:50 p.m.	Stevens, Hammond and Seaside	10:45 a.m.

LEAVE	SEASIDE DIVISION	ARRIVE
6:15 a.m.	Seaside for Warrenton, Flavel, Stevens and Astoria	12:50 p.m.
9:30 a.m.	ton, Flavel, Stevens and Astoria	7:30 p.m.
2:30 p.m.	Hammond, Fort Stevens and Astoria	9:25 a.m.

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St. Paul Fast Mail 7:45 p.m. via Spokane	Walla Walla, Lewiston, Spokane, Minneapolis, St. Paul, Duluth, Milwaukee, Chicago, and East	8:00 p.m.

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